THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

1. Orders for setting up of the "Institute of Rain and Moist Deciduous Forests Research, Jorhat have been issued and the Institute has become functional from 1st April, 1988.

2. Suitable land for setting up facilities is being acquired in consultation with the State Government.

3. The Institute is being provided with a Director with lull complement of supporting staff.

4. The areas of research identified for the Institute of Rain and Moist Deciduous Forests Research, Jorhat are:

Areas of Research

Basic Research

— Studies in Silvicultural characters of the species comprising the ecosystems of rain forests.

— Seed characters, germination and growth characters of important species.

— Ecology and energy flow in tropical forests eco-systems.

— Soil characteristics in humid forests and mangroves.

—' Role of mycorryzhae and soil micro-organisms. -

— Agricultural customs and effect of tree crops on crops in shifting cultivation areas.

—- Mechanical and chemical characteristics of forest produce in the Region.

— - Watershed management

practices. Technology

— Silvicultural practices for induc ing and tending natural regenera tion in forests.

— Conservation oriented manage ment practices.

—Shifting cultivation containment practices.

Integration of social practices with forest management practices. —Optimum utilization of forest products.

Application

— Standardisation of silvicultural and management practices of dif-ferent forest types.

— Optimum practices of raising tree crops in reclaimed sites.

~ Soil and Water conservation.

— Ensuring peoples participation in forestry.

—' Reduction in demand for wood.

Centrally Sponsored Irrigation Schemes

1499. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of centrally sponsored irrigation schemes in the country at present; and

(b) what is* the number of such ' schemes in Assam and the amount spent thereon so far?,

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES ([SHRIMATI (KRISHNA £AHI)r. (a) and (b) Irrigation Schemes are ordinarily planned funded and implemented by State Governments. Centrally sponsored schemes administered by the Ministry of Water Resources to assist States in the development of Water resources include the following:—

(i) Strengthening of ground water and surface water (MI) organisations,

(ii) Rationalisation of irrigation statistics on minor irrigation programme'

(iii) Census of minor irrigation schemes,

(iv) Command Area Development Programme,

(v) Encouraging irrigation through the use of sprinklers/drip systems, bydrams, water turbines, man or animal operated pumpsets, and

(vi) Scheme for rectification of diesel pump sets.

Facilities under the above schemes are available to all States. Assam is at present availing facilities under the Schemes at (i) to (iv).

Ground Water Irrigation Schemes in Assam

1500. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Assam has tremendous ground water potential and the proper exploitation of this potential may bring[1] about dynamic change in the agricultural scenario of the State; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to examine the prospect of ground water irrigation scheme in Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) Yes, Sir. The utilisable ground water resources for irrigation in Assam is estimated to be of the order $_0$f I-^{99} ro. ha.m./yr. The Brahmaputra valley in Assam is underlain by regionally extensive fresh water aquifers capable of providing ground water supplies through suitably designed tubewells to command 50 hectares of irrigated agriculture per tubewells.

(b) Minor Irrigation schemes, including ground water schemes, are planned, funded and executed by the State Government themselves from their own budgetary resources. Under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for North Eastern States, the Central Government provides a 50 per cent matching Central assistance for purchase of machinery and equipment and expenditure on staff for strengthening of the State Ground Water/ Minor Irrigation Organisations. Under this scheme. Central assistance of Rs. 120.027 lakh has been released to the Government of Assam during the first three years of the 7th Five Year Plan.

1501. *[Transferred to the 12th May,* 1988]

Discussion on making Darjeeling a Centraily-Administered Territory

1502. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a ,fact that there was a discussion in the Home Minis try on Darjeeling for making ihe Dar jeeling areas a Centrally-administered territory in view of the ever-increas ing turmoil and tension coupled with the gap in understanding between the West Bengal Government and the Gorkha insurgents; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?